

**Address terms as sociolinguistic markers in Early Modern English at the example  
of "Henry IV: Part 1" by William Shakespeare**

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Terms of address are "words or linguistic expressions that speakers use to appeal directly to their addressees" [Taavitsainen et al.: 1]. Apart from fulfilling such direct function, they often communicate the speaker's attitude and social position in relation to the person addressed.

Early Modern English (appr. 1500 – 1700) was the period when terms system of English flourished [ibid: 2]. It had an abundant complex of linguistic markers denoting a social position of the addressee and/or attitude towards them, namely: vocatives, i.e. notional words used to address a person directly (e.g., darling, sir, etc.), and pronominal address forms (pronouns used to refer to the addressee/speaker themselves, such as in: "You look tired", or "We, the King, are tired").

In this paper, I analyze the play "Henry IV: Part 1" by Shakespeare (1598), looking into the use of pronominal and nominal address terms by selected characters. The purpose of my study is to uncover how sociolinguistic factors are reflected in the use of address terms.

Early Modern English employed two **address pronouns** – *you* and *thou*, the choice between which was determined sociolinguistically. The term for the phenomenon is *T-V distinction*, introduced by Brown and Gilman (it employs first letters of second-person pronouns, singular and plural, in Latin (*tu* and *vu*), where it presumably initiated) [Brown, Gilman: 261].

**Majestic plural**, or royal "*we*", implies the use of first-person plural pronoun by a single speaker, where first-person singular is expected grammatically [Beckman: 145].

**Address forms**, or vocatives, include names, kinship terms, titles, military ranks and occupational terms [Taavitsainen et al: 2]. Brown and Gilman's **politeness theory**, as well as **power and solidarity semantics**, apply to address nouns. Moreover, "there is indeed a strong correlation between the nominal form of address and the address pronoun" [Brown, Gilman: 214].

Busse divides all nominal address forms into 6 categories: titles of courtesy (*liege, sir, etc.*); terms of occupation (*doctor, lieutenant, etc.*); terms of family relationship (*sister, coz, etc.*); generic terms of address (*gentlewoman, friend, lad*); terms of abuse (*knave, rascal*); terms of endearment (*love, wag, etc.*) [Busse: 204 – 212].

In the play *Henry IV, Part 1*, the choice of address forms plays a significant sociolinguistic role. I have analyzed its use by the characters whose social position and/or relationships make them most representative: the King, Falstaff, the Prince, and married couples: the Percies and the Mortimers.

At the preliminary stage of analysis, I counted how many times a certain character uses

vocatives, T- and V-forms and, in case of the King, majestic plural/ first person singular within a context, and summarized the results in tables. Then, I used the method of close reading to interpret the quantitative data and to reveal the patterns of each character's address behaviour.

### ***The King.***

For the King, T/V distribution is uneven: he addresses some characters mostly using *you* (Worcester – 10 times against 5 *thou*), some vica versa (e.g., Hotspur and Douglas addressed mostly by *thou*). Differences exist even within narrow social groups: thus, two sons of the King receive different address forms, Prince Hal mostly addressed using a T-form and his brother – a V-form. As for the vocatives, the King frequently uses titles and, in some context, names, reserving familiar name forms for Harry and kinship terms for his cousins. The King himself is addressed almost invariably via titles of courtesy, even by his sons. All family members address the King using a V-form and it is only an attacking enemy who dares to use *T*. Finally, there is no evidence that the King constantly prefers a T-form.

### ***Falstaff.***

Falstaff's idiolect is peculiar for *thou* of familiarity and complex derogatory address terms. He displays an unconventional use of *thou* to the Prince, a sign of their warm father-like relationships. Within his circle, he uses V-forms as a means of insult in order to display anger and rejection. There is no direct correlation, though, between how often Falstaff uses T to an interlocutor and whether the addressed belongs to the group (e.g., 22 cases of V against 2 cases of T for Bardolf). Instead, Falstaff switches between T and V depending on his own mood and context.

### ***The Prince.***

The Prince adapts perfectly to any given sociolinguistic context, fitting into patterns of power- and solidarity-based patterns of T/V distinction. He maintains the norm using a V-form and reverential vocatives to the King and nobility, being socially inferior to them due to his age. On the other hand, he uses *thou* to address his aristocratic enemy in a situation of war. Moreover, he consciously adapts to the language of commoners, calling his lower-class companions by their names.

### ***Women and Men.***

Men tend to use T to address their wives, while wives return V. The reason for this is that, in Elizabethan times, a woman occupied a lower social position than her husband, which implies the power-based use of T-V distinction. Women stick to prestigious and refined variant of speech and thus use a reserved V even at very emotional moments. Men, on the other hand, use *thou* towards their wives, the usage being not only solidarity-based (as in the case of Mortimer who demonstrates affection to his wife), but also power-based since women are perceived as socially inferior (as with Hotspur, who treats his wife disrespectfully).

On the whole, the characters of the play shift from *you* to *thou* to express:

- 1) anger/contempt/hostility (such as when Douglas is thousing the King);
- 2) affection/intimacy (Catherine in her flirtatious speech with Hotspur);
- 3) like-mindedness (Falstaff and Prince).

### **Источники и литература**

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